



Detail of replica canvas agricultural labourer's 'frock'

DANAE TANKARD

Narrative Cloth

The exhibition, 'Narrative Cloth' is the result of a collaboration between social historian, Danae Tankard, and three artists, Victoria Brown, Shirley Chubb and Rachel Johnston. The starting point has been Danae's research on the clothing of the rural poor in 17th century Sussex which was published as an article, "A pair of grass-green woollen stockings": the clothing of the rural poor in seventeenth-century Sussex', in the journal, *Textile History*, in 2012. This research drew on a diverse range of primary sources, including theft prosecutions, wills and probate inventories (lists of testators' moveable goods taken immediately after death).

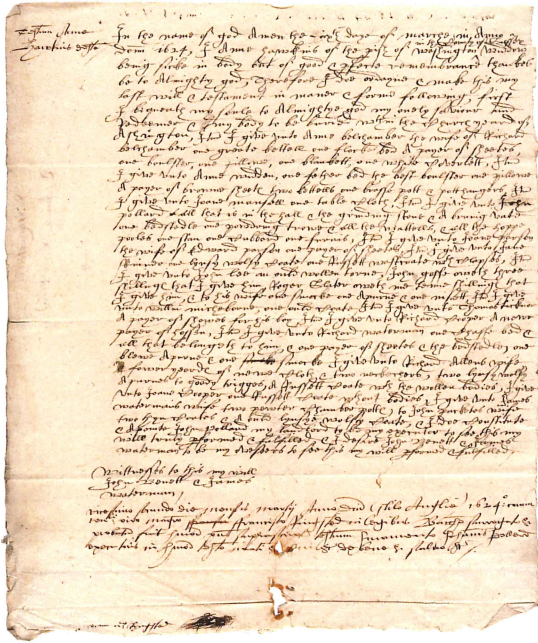
Each artist has produced a series of works in different media reflecting their personal response to the narratives of cloth and clothing explored in the article. Victoria is interested in colour: the difference between the more muted colours produced by the natural dyes used by the rural poor and those produced by our modern, chemical dyes. Shirley is interested in the production of textiles: the conversion of flax and wool

into linen and woollen yarn. Rachel is interested in the story of a woman prosecuted for the theft of wool in 1651. The thread binding these narratives together is the artists' identification of interconnections between the past and present.

These works give 17th century narratives of cloth and clothing highly creative material and digital forms. Danae's research on the clothing of the rural poor has previously been given a more literal material form in the production of two early 17th outfits as part of the Museum's Historic Clothing Project. To find out more about this project visit <https://historicclothing.wordpress.com/>. The project has been funded by the University of Chichester.

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Narrative Cloth



Will of Ann Hawkins of Washington, widow, 1624 (WSRO S Dean 14 1624)

